

The revelations following Graham Kennedy's death and the publication of the book *King & I* gave me the opportunity to tell the world I am gay, and proud of it. Also, I am HIV positive, and not ashamed of it, and in this day and age, no-one should be.

I deeply appreciate being invited to join the Hon. Michael D. Kirby AC CMG and many others in supporting and endorsing The Potential Wedding Album.

I know many same sex couples who are living together, some for many years. They are all respected citizens but they are denied the right to get married because of the Marriage Act 1961 that defines marriage as a union between a man and a woman. Unlike many countries and states around the world I believe this limitation discriminates against the many same-sex couples in Australia who should be entitled to marriage equality and the legal benefits, if that is what they desire.

Recently I completed writing my autobiography *Twice as Hard*. After 14 years of writing it would have been nice to receive some financial compensation. But, much to my disappointment, three publishers declined to even read the manuscript saying my story had been told in *King & I*. However, three well known authors, one Adrian Tame author of the best seller *The Matriarch*, told me they were very impressed by the manuscript and that the book should be published.

I then decided to publish *Twice as Hard* as an E-Book on the internet. A Pay Pal account was arranged two weeks ago so the book could be sold for \$9.00. However, I realize the book will attract a lot of media attention and already a current affairs television program has approached me. After much reflection I felt I would prefer to avoid any sensationalism.

Therefore I have decided to make the book available free of charge. I believe it will be beneficial to many people who have experienced similar highs and lows in their lives as I have. I also hope it will be inspirational to gay people, same sex couples and especially people with HIV.

If you would like a copy please email me at roba9@ozemail.com.au and I will forward a copy with a password.

For those who appreciate the book I would simple ask that you make a donation to HEARTT 2000 the charity supporting Doctor Philippe Seur the HIV specialist in Pattaya who has over 2000 patients, both Thais and foreigners, many of whom owe their lives to Philippe.

Rob Astbury